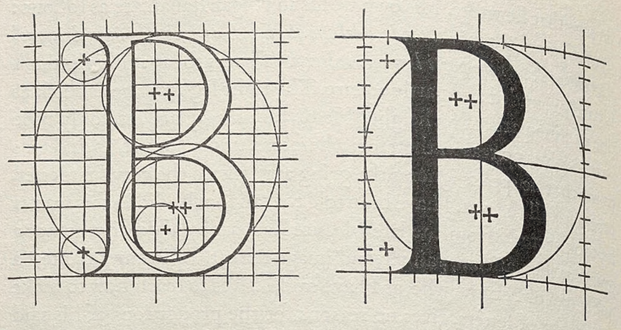


THE letter B, here drawn, and composed of the I and the O, is ten units in height and seven in breadth, with seven curved lines, some inside and some outside; & I have made seven little crosses, +, at which to place the foot of the compass, in order to draw the corresponding circles. The curve below should be broader by one unit than that above, and the dividing line should fall on the central horizontal line of the square, as in all the other letters that follow. Some ancient writers made the B with only six turns of the compass, as I have indicated in the black B, leaving the corner at the foot of the leg, within the larger division, without a curve and turn of the compass. Make that corner curved or not, as you please. Says Martianus Capella, in *De Nuptijs Philologiæ,* the third book: B, *labris per spiritus impetum reclusis dicimus;* that is to say: 'We pronounce (or should pronounce) the B with our lips partly open, by force of the expulsion of our breath.' B in Greek is called *Vita,* and is pronounced like V consonant, as when they pronounce Βαρβαροσ, *Varvaros,* and Βαβαι, *Vavæ.* Which pronunciation the Gascons retain in many words; as, when they mean to say, 'Iay beu de bon vin,' they say, 'Iay veu de von bin.' In like manner, in Latin: 'Non in solo pane *bibit* homo,' for '*vivit* homo.' And in thus speaking, the meaning in good French and good Latin is often perverted, as you see in the examples quoted—*Iay veu* for *Iay beu* and *bibit* for *vivit.* They do many other inconsistent things; as when they say 'ung veau bieillard,' for 'ung beau vieillard.' Instead of V consonant, they say B, and instead of B, V consonant. When *Mi* in Greek—that is to say, M—comes before *Pi,* —that is, before P,—the *Pi* is pronounced as the Latins and we pronounce B. The Greeks write Λαμπασ & Πεμπω, with *Pi,*—and say 'Lam-

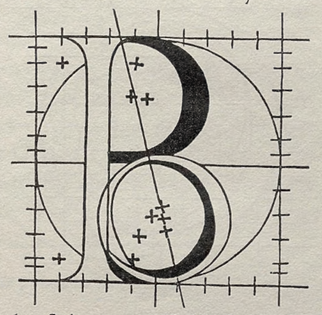


*bas*' and 'Pem*bo*.' The Gascons pronounce B like V consonant, not only in French, but in Latin: as when they say 'Vona dies' for 'Bona dies,' 'Bibat Faustus' for 'Vivat Faustus,' 'Beni ad me et vives' for 'Veni ad me et bibes.' Because they use V consonant so often in their words, it would seem that the Latins call them *Vascones* rather than *Gascones,* to make covert reference thereto.

I Have seen Germans, too, who used P for B when they spoke in French, as when, wishing to say, 'Vela vne bien belle et bonne beste,' they said, 'Vela vne pien pelle et ponne peste.' This fault is of common occurrence with them.

I Pass on, and come to the fulfillment of my promise, wherein I said, at the end of the Second Book, that, to show that all our Attic letters are made from the I and the O, I would draw a B in such wise that those letters could be seen therein. The figure is that which comes next.

IN this figure & drawing you can see how, as I have said many times heretofore, the I and the O, and chiefly the I, are the pattern, and the two letters from which all the other Attic letters are made and fashioned. In this B, observe that the straight leg is an I, which I have left in white, to show it more plainly; and, likewise, the O in the lower division is white, and the rest of the B black; so that, if you will fill out the white I and O in black, they will make the B complete and perfect, leaving white a little of the curve of the O, on the inner side, which touches the foot of the I.



TO make this figure, we must have eleven centres whereon to place the foot of the compass to draw the circumferences, of which centres I have marked the places in their squares. In the black B which I drew above, there were only six, which were all that it needed; but in this one there are more, because of the said I and the O, which have their whole shapes & figures there, without injury to the said B, which